

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAST SIXTY YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

No. 8 of a Series of Papers by Dr. J. B. Alexander, of Mecklenburg Co., N. C.
Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Before the War Between the States unbounded hospitality prevailed in all the Southern States. We now look back for sixty years and see the time of slow travel. The average rate of speed did not exceed forty miles a day. The roads were pretty much as nature made them, and the mode of travel was either horse-back or in wagons, and the principal manner to receive hospitality was at a wayside house that would entertain travelers.

OLD-TIME HOSPITALITY.

It was customary to furnish the guest with the best of entertainment the times afforded, and also have his horse well cared for. This was hospitality between strangers, and the only charge was, "Call again when you are passing."

In 1840, at the great Harrison camp-ground, twelve miles north of Charlotte, when Harrison was a candidate for President, the speakers were provided for in a royal manner; tables were loaded with the choicest viands in the greatest abundance. When all had partaken of the repast, a great many baskets were sent around to the old, the sick and the infirm, for miles around to the poor.

Families would visit their friends in wagons, in the winter time, and spend several days and nights. On such occasions the finest cooking was called in, and the best material was furnished. Fine, large wild turkeys, and juicy venison were plenty at that time; also the old-fashioned pound cake with syllabub, wine for the younger folk, and pure rye whiskey for those who were rheumatic. Everything was raised at home and hospitality reigned supreme.

Fifty years ago at the country churches, we always had two sermons on Sunday, with a picnic at interval. This was a time for a display of gallantry. The boys and girls rode horseback, and if a boy helped a lady on her horse, as a matter of course he would see her home and stay with her for tea, when such hospitality would be extended as is never witnessed at the opening of the twentieth century.

The age of such hospitality is gone—it is now a lost art. It was not only shown in entertaining the lonely horse-back rider who was looking for "new countries;" but it was shown in every day life. The people in a neighborhood would call on one another for help to raise a house, or barn; to get a field cleared, rails made, and logs rolled and burned.

QUILTINGS AND LOG ROLLINGS.

A sumptuous dinner was prepared, a decanter of whiskey or brandy was always on hand to give zest to the dinner, and wit to enliven those who bore the burdens of the day. The women of the neighborhood, as well as the men, had their part to per-

form, for they always had a quilting or sewing—making garments for the family. The day before the "gathering" the good wife would have the quilt put up in frames; or if a sewing was intended, every garment would be cut out and rolled up to itself. The sewing thread was prepared, by being doubled and twisted, with several pieces of beeswax ready to wax the thread to keep it from kinking. The neighborhood gossip is now discussed; what luck each one had met with in raising poultry, what depredations they had suffered from minks and possums, and hounds sucking their eggs. In these early times not a club was in all the country, but it is probable the conversation was as chaste and profitable as we find sixty years later. The day's work done, supper finished and the largest room made ready, we hear the violins getting ready for the old-fashioned dance, either the Irish jig, or the Virginia reel. After they had enjoyed themselves for two hours they start for their various homes, and on the way would discuss the proficiency of those "who trip the light fantastic toe." Waltzing or "hugging set to music," had not then been brought to the soil of North Carolina; and the skill of dancing was judged by the ease of movement and the activity of the performer, without showing how gracefully hugging can be done while sliding about over the floor.

J. B. ALEXANDER, M. D.

JULY COUNTY MEETINGS.

Every Allianceman Should Attend These Important Gatherings.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

I am thinking of old friends and of the many kindnesses received and am almost persuaded to call the roll. In Vance County there is Irwin Green, George Stainback, Capt. J. M. B. Hunt, Jesse Kelly, Sam Greenway, and so many others that are dear to my memory. Down in Franklin H. D. Edgerton, Dick Foster, J. N. Williams, Dr. Malone, Ed Jones, Mack Gupton, and hundreds of other good fellows. And then down in old Nash I think first of Brother Cooper, who met me in Louisburg and carried me fifteen miles across the country to his home and treated me so nice, and so many others that I learned to love. And then I go up to Oxford and out to Caleb Knott's, Dr. Hobgood's, Jim Dune's, D. W. Hunt's, Walter Hobgood's, J. W. Allen's, Jack Murray's, M. Blaylock's, and—well, time and space forbid—I wish I could name them all and tell them how I learned to love them. I wonder what these good people are doing and if the Farmers' Alliance is still prospering in their hands?

I would remind them that the second Thursday in July is the regular County Alliance day, and that it is important that every Allianceman go. County officers are to select, and delegates to the State Alliance, and business of great importance will come up, and the success of the State Alliance largely depends on that of the county meetings. Let me urge

every Allianceman in every county in the Old North State to do his level best to make both the county and the State meetings the best ever yet held.

I have recently visited Rockingham and Caswell Counties, and have traveled largely over Alamance, and wherever I go I find the Alliance springing into new life. The fires are still burning and all the people need is a chance.

Let me say to Bro. D. N. Hunt, of Granville: call your people together some Saturday in July, and organize a County Alliance, and elect delegates to the State Alliance. And let us all work to have the best State meeting ever yet held.

Sincerely,

H. M. CATES.

Alamance Co., N. C.

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